

NEWS RELEASE

Maine Department of Education, Susan A. Gendron, Commissioner

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Department Makes Conditional Contract Award for the Maine Learning Technology Initiative Program

Conditional award to Apple Computer, Inc. for laptops, wireless networks, training and services

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AUGUSTA— The State of Maine Division of Purchases and the Maine Department of Education announced today that Apple Computer, Inc. was selected as the top-scoring bidder for services and equipment for the Maine Learning Technology Initiative. The Department issued a request for proposals on January 13, 2006 for a four-year agreement to provide personal, portable computing devices with suitable basic applications for all 7th and 8th grade students and teachers, along with upgraded wireless networks for all participating middle schools, appropriate server capacity, training and technical support.

This award is a final decision, subject to State Purchases Review Committee approval and final legislative approval of the Department's budget. The Department will now enter into negotiations with Apple Computer, Inc. in order to finalize the terms and conditions of the agreement for the services and equipment for the Maine Learning Technology Initiative.

Under the current timelines and subject to final legislative approval of the Department's budget, the Department intends to deploy new laptop computers to teachers, librarians, principals and technology coordinators in the summer of 2006 to begin preparing for the 2006-7 school year. New laptop computers for all grade 7 and 8 public middle school students will be issued at the start of the school year. In all, the Department estimates that over 36,000 laptops will be deployed.

"We are pleased with the strong educational focus of Apple's proposal, and we look forward to a continued partnership in providing the students of Maine the tools and resources for the 21st Century," commented Bette Manchester, Director of Special Projects for the Department of Education.

Updates and background information regarding the Maine Learning Technology Initiative are available on the website at <http://www.maine.gov/mlti/>.